

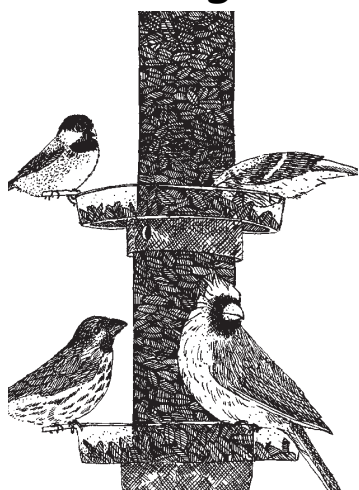
Continuing the Iowa Tradition



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November 2004

Continuing The Iowa Tradition



This is a busy time of year. School and sports take up so much time that we often forget to go outdoors and have fun. Fun can be had in many ways in the fall. You can catch that last largemouth bass before the ice comes; you can get your birdfeeders stocked; you can watch the fall migration and get prepared for the winter feeder birds; and you can go out and enjoy the hunt for deer, ducks, squirrels, or turkeys.

In this issue of *Continuing the Iowa Tradition*, we have articles on great fall fishing, the new blaze orange law and how you can add your hunting/fishing/nature photos to our DNR website. We also have included all of the hunting and trapping season dates to our calendars, so you can get out with your parents. When you go outdoors this fall and winter, remember to obey our laws, always ask permission, go with your parents and make sure they have their hunting & fishing licenses. Most of all, be safe and have fun. Remember – this is *your* heritage and the Iowa

Blaze Orange Clothing Now Required for Upland Bird Hunting

By Dale Anderson

SW District Recreational Safety Officer for the Iowa DNR

Talk to any group of hunters in Iowa, or anywhere else for that matter, and the conversation inevitably turns eventually to something like “Did you hear about that new law the DNR has passed?” Well, the DNR does not pass laws – the state legislature does. While it’s true that the DNR makes suggestions and asks for certain laws to be introduced, legislators are the real lawmakers.

A law was passed during the last legislative session will affect the largest segment of hunters in Iowa – the upland bird hunters. This law is called the “Hunter’s Orange Apparel” law, and it is in effect for this fall’s hunting seasons. Deer hunters have been familiar with

blaze orange requirements for many years. This new version, however, adds a paragraph to that rule that pertains specifically to the hunting of upland game birds.



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Blaze Orange Law

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The Law

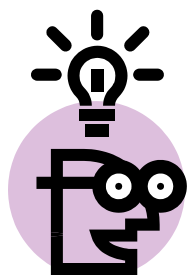
Following is the exact wording (with key words in bold for emphasis) of the new law:

481A.122 HUNTER'S ORANGE APPAREL
(2003 Code of Iowa)
(old section)

A person shall not hunt **deer** with firearms unless the person is at the time wearing one or more of the following articles of visible, external apparel: A vest, coat, jacket, sweatshirt, sweater, shirt, or coveralls, the color and material of which shall be **solid blaze orange**.

(newly added section)

A person shall not hunt **upland game birds**, as defined by the department, unless the person is at the time wearing one or more of the following articles of visible, external apparel: A **hat, cap**, vest, coat, jacket, sweatshirt, sweater, shirt, or coveralls, the color and material of which shall be **at least fifty percent solid blaze orange**.



Understanding the Law

So, who does this apply to and how will it affect your hunting this fall? First of all, note that the first paragraph is exactly the same as it has always read. A solid blaze orange vest – at the minimum – is still required to be worn by all firearm deer hunters.

The newly added second paragraph pertains to upland bird hunters.

At this time, upland birds are being tentatively defined as: pheasants, quail, Hungarian partridge, ruffed grouse and woodcock. Notice that the requirement for that section is, at the minimum, a hat or cap, as opposed to a vest for deer hunting. This differs from the deer hunting requirement as does the amount of color of the article. Clothing worn for the upland bird hunting section can be as little as 50% blaze orange. Therefore, orange camouflage is an accept-

able article of clothing, as long as it is at least 50% blaze orange.

Importance of the Law

The reason for this law relates directly to the number of bird hunting accidents seen in past years. The most common type of hunting incident has involved one hunter being out of sight of another hunter and being shot because he could not be seen through the cover they were hunting. In most of these cases, these hunters could both have been seen had they been wearing blaze orange clothing of some kind.

Think of it this way. Who are you usually hunting with? Who is most likely to be a hunting accident victim? The answer is that your best friend or a family member are the ones you hunt with and, therefore, are the most likely to be shot if they are not seen. This new law will provide vital visibility to help to avoid such a disaster for you and your hunting partners.



• Buy your hunting and fishing licenses on-line at www.iowadnr.com.

• Just click on Hunting Information on the menu at the right and then click on Hunting/Trapping License Fees.

Cottontail rabbit season: Sept. 1-Feb. 28
Squirrel (fox and gray) season: Sept. 1-Jan. 31
Snow goose season: Sept. 25-Jan. 9

• Check the calendar pages for the rest of the hunting dates and a few rules and regulations!

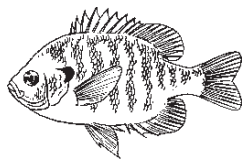
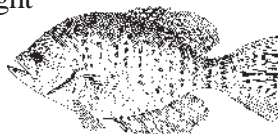
Fall into Fishin'

Think Halloween is the only thing to look forward to in the fall? Most people get all excited about fishing in the spring as the weather warms up, but enthusiasm melts with those hot summer days. That's why fall is the perfect time for fishing!



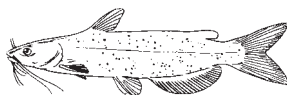
If you like to drown a few worms and/or enjoy frying up fresh fish, get your rod and reel back out! Although fish aren't as aggressive in the fall as they are in spring when they're spawning, they are easy to catch in the fall if you fish the right spot with the right bait and tackle.

Check out a local pond or small lake with good shore access. Fish move back into shallower areas as the water cools. Panfish, especially bluegill and crappie, often are plentiful in these waters. Crappie can be found in larger reservoirs too. These guys hang out near structure – snags, Christmas trees, rock piles, jetties. Fish for catfish on the bottom.



Tackle

For panfish, think small and light when it comes to tackle. Small hooks (size 6), light line (6 pound), small split shot sinkers and one-inch or smaller bobbers. The smaller and lighter your rod and reel the better. Light or ultra-light tackle works great. It's easier to tell when you have a bite, and bringing in a nice crappie can be as much fun as landing a large bass on heavier equipment. Spincasting rigs are easiest for beginners, but spinning (open face or "trigger spin") rigs are really popular with anglers who have a little more experience.



If you're going strictly for catfish, use a bit heavier rod and reel (medium weight) and line (10 pound). Use heavier sinkers to help you cast out to holes and get your bait on the bottom. Treble (three-pronged) hooks work well to hold a variety of catfish baits.

Bait and Lures

Following are a few suggestions for bait and lures from our fishing expert:

Bluegill – night crawlers

Crappie – minnows, small jigs

Catfish – night crawlers, stink bait, liver

Presentation

Bluegill – Use a small chunk of worm threaded onto the hook. (Bluegill are notorious bait stealers.) Place a small split shot on the line a foot or so from the hook. Position the bobber so your bait is about a foot off the bottom. If you aren't having any luck, adjust the depth of the bobber.

Crappie – Like with bluegill, use a small split shot and bobber. Use a small minnow for bait. You can also use a small jig, especially if you can fish off a dock. Jig by pulling the line up a couple feet and letting it "float" back down. Let the jig sit a few minutes before jigging again.



Catfish – Use a bit larger hook or treble hook. Press a wad of stink bait on the hook or hook a chunk of liver of several night crawlers to completely cover the hook. Place a sinker a couple feet up from the hook. Cast toward holes or deeper areas and let the bait set. It may take a while for a catfish to smell the offering.

Other Snippets of Wisdom...



The new *Iowa Lakes Fishing Guide* includes a rating of shoreline access for public lakes.



Be sure to ask permission to fish ponds on private property!



Bluegill and crappie – wait for the bobber to go completely under the water before setting the hook.



Catfish – be prepared for them to "run" with the bait. Make sure your drag is set to offer resistance but not break the line when they hit.



Paddlefish



Although its average weight is two pounds, the state record paddlefish weighed 107 pounds and was almost six feet long. It has a flat, broad, paddleshaped snout; a long tapered gill cover; and no scales except for a patch on the upper lobe of the forked tail.

The snout contains an elaborate system of sense organs. The body is gray to blue-gray on the back and sides with a white belly. The skeleton is mainly cartilage.

Natural History

The paddlefish lives in large rivers, preferring slow moving water over four feet deep. It is found in the border rivers and lower reaches of their large tributaries. It formerly was common in natural lakes in Dickinson County, but is now absent. For spawning it requires a large free-flowing river with gravel bars that will remain flooded for the duration of the spring.

It eats microscopic crustaceans and insect larvae filtered from the water as it swims about with its mouth open. It swims continuously in open water and may leap out of the water. It does not seem to have a home range and may swim hundreds of miles.

It reaches maturity at age seven. It may live 20 to 30 years. It spawns in April or May. Eggs are scattered over silt-free sand or gravel bottom in a large free-flowing river. Floods of several days' duration are needed for spawning to be successful, as the gravel where the eggs are deposited is normally out of the water. Eggs are sticky and attach to objects on the bottom. Eggs hatch in about nine days. Over exploitation and changes in our large rivers have greatly reduced the numbers of paddlefish in our waters.

Iowa Status

uncommon; native

Iowa Range

Missouri and Mississippi Rivers and lower reaches of tributaries

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.

Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.



Natural Area Spotlight

Lake Ahquabi State Park

"Ahquabi" is a Sauk and Fox word meaning "resting place," and it is a fitting name for this scenic 770-acre park. The park site was recommended by "Ding" Darling, nationally known Iowa political cartoonist and conservationist, and was dedicated in 1936.

Lake Ahquabi is perhaps best known for its crappie fishery, although bluegill and redear sunfish also provide some excellent fishing opportunities. There is no outboard motor size limit on the lake, although boats should be operated at no wake speed.

Lake Ahquabi was renovated and dredged during the mid-1990's. As part of this project, fish habitat such as rock reefs, woody structure and shoreline protection was added in various areas of the lake. In addition, fishing jetties were reconstructed and added to the lake to increase fishing access. A fishing pier was also constructed and is accessible year round. During the winter months an aerator keeps the water from freezing below the pier for great winter fishing.

While fishing at Lake Ahquabi, your family should camp in the newly-renovated campground. Lake Ahquabi State Park offers hiking trails, a swimming beach and great camping amenities. During the summer months interpretive programs are offered to campers on Friday and Saturdays.

Ahquabi Aquatics

Lake area: 108 acres.

Shoreline length: 13.45 mi.

Average depth: 8.2 ft.

Maximum depth: 17.5 ft.


Boat access: 1 hard surface ramp

Motor restrictions: None at no wake speed.


Special Regulations: 18-inch minimum size limit on largemouth bass.





October 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Geese: Daily limit is 2 Canada geese, 2 white-fronted geese, 2 brant, and 20 snow geese, EXCEPT during the special September Canada goose season in the Des Moines and Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Zones when the bag limit is 3 Canada geese.					1 White-tailed deer bow season opens Fall bow turkey season opens	2
3	4	5	6 Fun outdoor activity: Help rake the yard and then jump in them	7	8 leaves in	9
10	11 Fall gun turkey season opens	12	13	14	15	16 Duck and Canada goose (North Zone) seasons open
17	18	19 Visit http://homepage.mac.com/cohora/ext/oct.html for the October internet scavenger hunt and learn why leaves fall	20	21	22	23
White-tailed deer muzzleloader season (Oct. 16-24)					Youth Rooster Pheasant Season (ages 15 and younger)	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31  Happy Halloween Daylight Savings Time ends				Are you bored? Go on a Halloween hike	Go on a Halloween-	Rooster pheasant, bobwhite quail & Canada goose (South Zone) seasons open

November 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Election Day Remind your parents to vote!	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 Fun outdoor activity: Go on a leaf hike with your family! Take a nature walk and see how many different leaf colors, shapes, and sizes you can find.	11	12	13
14	15 Fun outdoor activity: Make a scarecrow! Spend an afternoon with your family gathering old clothing, like jeans and a flannel shirt, and stuff them to make the body of your scarecrow. You can use hay, leaves, or crumbled newspaper for stuffing, although it looks best when you have a least a small amount of hay to stick out from around the neck, hands, and feet	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Turkey Day 	26	27
28	29	30	Ducks: Daily limit is 6, including no more than 4 mallards (of which no more than 2 may be female), 2 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 1 black duck, 1 pintail, 1 canvasback and 3 scaup. Mergansers: Daily limit is 5, including no more than 1 hooded merganser.			

December 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Coots: Daily limit is 15. For Duck Identification go to: http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/tools/duckdist/duckdist.htm		1	2	3	4	
5 Canada goose season (North Zone) ends	6	7	8	9 Duck season (North Zone) ends	10	11
12 Duck season (South Zone) ends	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Canada goose season (South Zone) ends	20 Fall bow turkey & white-tailed deer bow open White-tailed deer muzzleloader opens	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day 
26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve 	

January 2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 New Year's Day
	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Fun outdoor activity: Go outside and listen for the great-horned owls. This is mating season for them, so they will be "talking" to each other a lot.					
9	10 Rooster pheasant, fall bow turkey & white-tailed deer muzzleloader & bow seasons end	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Go on a hibernating bug hunt! Shine a light under bark, check out holes in trees and look on branch tips for hibernating bugs. On warm days, watch for tiny pieces of dirt that seem to jump on the snow. These are snow fleas, more correctly called Springtails or Collembola, tiny insects that scavenge the snow for bits of food. These bugs are what the tiny chickadees and woodpeckers are looking for as they probe with their beaks.					
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 Bobwhite quail season ends					

Nifty Navigation

Map and Compass

Modified with permission from *Outdoor Living Skills Series: Map and Compass*, Missouri Department of Conservation

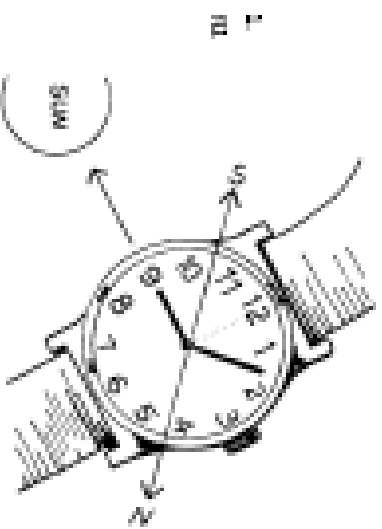
- ☐ Use your watch as a compass. This won't work with a digital watch.
- ☐ Use the sun and stars to determine general directions.

Anticipated time of activity: One 30 – 60 minute session

Directions:

Hold the watch horizontally with the hour hand pointing toward the sun. South is mid-way between the hour hand and the number twelve going the shortest way around the face of the watch.

Notes: The watch must be set to standard time for the time zone you are in. This method works between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. on a sunny day, but is not very reliable if the sun is high.



Finding the North Star

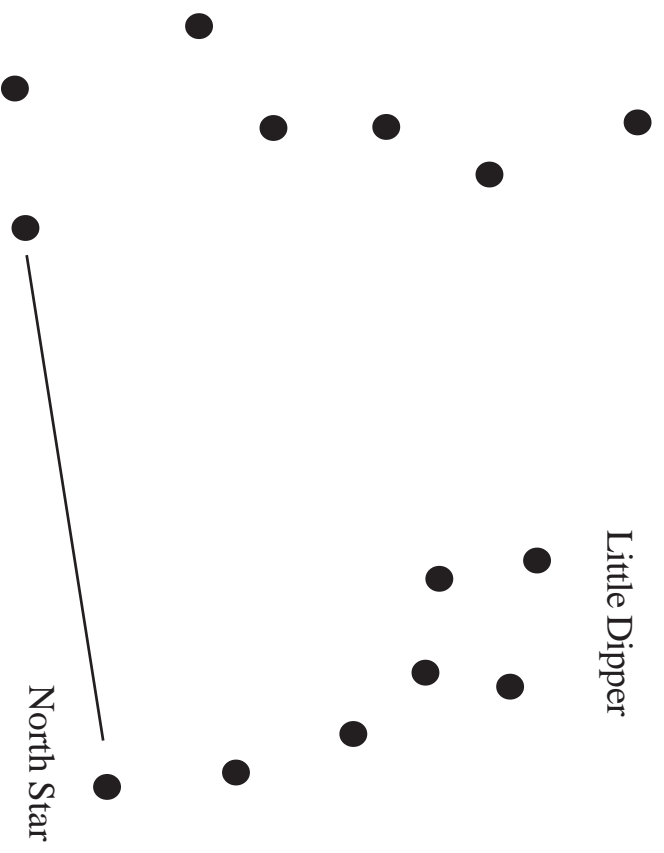
Use the stars to determine north on a clear night. Imagine a line extending from the bottom edge of the “pan” of the Big Dipper to the tail star (end of the handle) of the Little Dipper. This is Polaris, the North Star.

Extension:

Research and/or construct a sundial. Research and learn to locate additional stellar objects used in navigation.

Big Dipper

Little Dipper



Fall is Fun



Iowa Traditions!

We want to hear about your outdoor traditions! Please send a photo and a short paragraph about the activity in the photo through e-mail, with your parent's permission, to Michelle.Wilson@dnr.state.ia.us. If the photo is with an animal taken while fishing or hunting, include the type of animal it is, date that it was taken and where you were. The size of the photos submitted should be less than 500K, and preferred files types are .jpg, .gif, and .tif. Not all photos submitted may be selected for inclusion.

Legal Statement - the paragraph below basically means that if you send us a photo, you are allowing Iowa DNR to use it on the website, in *The Iowa Conservationist* magazine or in the annual big fish report. The term non-exclusive license means that you can use the picture however you want, but we can use it too. Please don't be scared away by these statements; we are just trying to protect both your interests and our interests.

By submitting a fishing photograph, you are granting the Iowa Department of Natural Resources a non-exclusive license to use and reproduce the photograph for all such purposes as the department may deem appropriate. Examples of potential uses include the *Continuing the Iowa Tradition* web site or *The Iowa Conservationist* magazine.

